

You'll Fall for Me, Today or Tomorrow Chapter 101

On the next day, Shermaine went to the Tyson residence.

There was no one except Margaret and Old Mr. Tyson.

If anything, Margaret liked Shermaine very much. It wasn't only because she was the candidate to become her daughter-in-law. In fact, they had watched her growing up, so their feelings toward her were different from others.

When she was young, they promised to make her Matthew's wife, but seeing how big the age gap between them was, the Tysons didn't insist and asked Matthew to consider other women.

Nevertheless, their efforts were in vain.

Now that Shermaine had grown up, her feelings for Matthew never changed, so the Tysons, especially Margaret, were delighted.

However, Matthew expressed how he felt nothing toward Shermaine in front of the latter. Margaret felt sorry for Shermaine and felt that it was a pity, as they would make a great match.

Given that she couldn't change her son's mind, Margaret could only treat Shermaine like someone close, while she felt sad for the latter. She's such a delicate lady. How great would it be if she can become my daughter-in-law?

She asked, "Shermaine, you just came back yesterday. Why not rest for a bit at home first?"

"Mrs. Tyson, I miss you and Mr. Tyson, so I'm here to visit you guys. You guys miss me too, right?" Shermaine acted like a child in front of Matthew's parents, unlike how aloof she was in public or how scary and vicious she was in front of Lizzie.

With this, she was able to please them.

After all, they didn't have a daughter, while their only granddaughter wasn't close to them, so Shermaine had gained their favor.

In the afternoon, Shermaine ate lunch with them and was always patient in keeping them company.

Looking at Shermaine, Margaret said, "Shermaine, if only you're our daughter. My sons are so busy with their work that they seldom come back to us. Plus, Ellie was nowhere to be seen. You really make us feel happy."

Daughter?

Shermaine was secretly displeased to be treated as merely a daughter.

However, there was no way she could tell them how she felt.

Hugging Margaret, she whined, "Mrs. Tyson, even if I'm not your daughter, I can be your little sweetheart. I didn't succeed in this life, but I'll pray to become your daughter in the next life."

Margaret started believing in reincarnations as she was old, and when she heard what Shermaine said, she was overjoyed.

Taking Shermaine's hand into hers, she let out a faint sigh.

Actually, she knew what Shermaine wanted.

Caressing her hand, Margaret explained, "Shermaine, I want you to be our daughter-in-law so badly, but we can't make Matthew change his mind. He's such an insolent fool for letting you down."

Shermaine shook her head as she covered Margaret's hands with her other hand. "Mrs. Tyson, please don't say that. I can't blame him for not liking me. Plus, I'll try to make him fall for me, and I will not give up before he finds someone he loves. Matt doesn't like me now, but that doesn't mean I don't have a chance in the future, right? Mrs. Tyson, will you support me?"

Margaret nodded, even though she knew it was impossible, as she knew her son way too well.

He would've fallen for Shermaine long ago, but he didn't have any feelings toward her after so many years, so it was impossible for him to fall for her in the future.

Unless he didn't bother about love and just wanted to marry for the sake of continuing the bloodline.

Nonetheless, she wished Shermaine to do her best, and maybe she could really make Matthew fall for her.

"Of course I support you," replied Margaret.

Shermaine asked, "Then Mrs. Tyson, who's the woman with Matt recently?"

Margaret's eyes widened in shock. "Woman? There's no one with him. Or maybe I didn't know. Don't worry. I'll call him back for dinner tonight. You can stay here to meet him and take this chance to get along with him. I will support you fully."

Shermaine smiled while her longing to meet Matthew grew. She didn't get to see him the previous day, so she could only rely on the Tysons to gain the chance to do so.

Matthew was called to return for a dinner at the Tyson residence, while Clarissa found herself a company.

Ellie was eating with Clarissa, but the latter was puzzled. Why didn't Ellie go back home with Matthew?

Ellie looked at Clarissa and said, "They only ask Uncle Matt for dinner, not me. I don't want to go back, anyway. I bet Grandma's nagging at Uncle Matt for his marriage matters again. Ha!"

The Tysons didn't invite Ellie because they were worried she would cook up trouble, given how she didn't like Shermaine to begin with. However, Ellie didn't know Shermaine had returned to D City.

Clarissa's heart skipped a beat. "Your family members... Are they always so anxious about Uncle Matthew's marriage?"

Placing down her spoon, Ellie replied, "Of course. Although he is an eligible bachelor, my grandparents have different thoughts about it, and they want their kids to have a family. Tsk!

I don't want to marry anyone either. These old fellas! Why won't they understand that it's not compulsory for everyone to marry and have kids? Just let us make the choice."

Clarissa replied calmly, "It's just that they have different mindsets."

Complicated feelings rose in Clarissa's heart when she thought of the Tysons urging Matthew to get married soon.

Will we be able to reach that step together?

However, there was no point to mull over this. She would just have to go with the flow and see how everything turned out in the end.

"Helen?" Suddenly, Clarissa was dragged out of her daze when Ellie called out to Helen, and she looked in the direction where the latter was looking at.

Clarissa felt nervous while Helen saw them. The latter was with her husband. Blake knew Helen was on bad terms with Clarissa, but even if he loved her, he couldn't disregard Clarissa just like how she did.

And so what if Clarissa was only Matthew's lover? At least until now, she was the only woman Matthew was with.

No one can guarantee that Matthew would not marry her.

And there's nothing wrong with becoming friends with her.

Gripping on Helen's fingers, Blake gave her a comforting gaze and led her toward Clarissa. "What a coincidence, Ms. Quigley. We meet again."

Ellie turned to Clarissa before glancing at Helen. When did they become so close?

They even come to greet her.

Clarissa's heart started racing, as she was worried they would mention Matthew.

I've made it clear enough with Helen. I wish to have nothing to do with her.

Clarissa replied, "Yeah. It's such a coincidence, Mr. Zimmer and Mrs. Zimmer. I'm sorry, but I'm having a meal with my friend, so I'll stop here."

It was obvious that she didn't want to talk to them.

Helen snorted, "Blake, let's go. She's arrogant as her status' different now that she has a powerful boyfriend."

Ellie frowned as she glared at Helen with hostility.

The latter knew Ellie was close to Clarissa, and she was always defending her. "What? Did I say anything wrong, Ellie?"

"Helen!" Dean scolded, but his wife ignored him.

Ellie scoffed, "Helen, how many years had it been? Why is your hostility only getting stronger? It seems you're still a fool after all these years. You already have a husband, so why are you harboring hatred toward someone innocent? Could it be that you still can't forget about that scumbag?"

"Shut up, Ellie," Helen growled, and when she turned to her husband, his expression turned unpleasant.

Ellie was merciless toward Helen, but before she was about to continue with her words, Clarissa gestured her to stop.

Seeing Clarissa shaking her head, Ellie let out a cold snort and turned away without saying anything.

Helen was dragged away by Blake, and no one would know what would happen to the couple. A fight, perhaps?

After the couple left, Ellie looked at Clarissa in confusion. "Why are you so merciful toward her? She treated you so badly during your university days."

The grudges Helen held toward Clarissa and the troubles the former caused for her had left her in a miserable state.

However, that was all in the past.

Clarissa explained, "Forget it. She's already married. It wouldn't be good to bring up the past and leave her marriage in shambles."

"What does that have to do with you? I don't think I've said anything wrong. Given that she's still brooding over it after so many years, she must find it hard to forget about that scumbag," Ellie argued.

To her surprise, Clarissa only shook her head and said, "Helen has high self-esteem. She's picking on me because she couldn't face her past mistakes."

Honestly, it wasn't only because of that scumbag boyfriend of hers. Helen was annoyed that Clarissa was better than her, be it their achievements or their beauty.

Ellie couldn't help but laugh. "Right. She'll only be a loser in life compared to you, but I'll give her credit for marrying a morally upright man."

Clarissa nodded in agreement. Ellie's words after that caught her off guard, as she didn't expect the former would turn the questions over to her. "Say it. Who's your boyfriend? Helen already knew, but I as your closest friend doesn't. Clarissa, you'll have to tell me now."

Ellie was determined to get the answer from Clarissa that day.

The latter's heart started racing as she bit on her lip while wearing a troubled expression.

Looking at her expression, Ellie was guessing in her mind. "Helen said that your boyfriend is from an impressive background. Her husband is from the Zimmer family, but he didn't dare to disregard you and came all the way here to greet you. This shows that your boyfriend is a big shot for sure."

After pausing for a while, she continued, "I know little of the Zimmers, but I've heard of them. As for those who are eligible for their respect, they must be someone I know or I've heard of in the upper society in D City. You told me he is ten years older than you, so..."

Analyzing the little clues she had, Ellie had a feeling that she was getting closer to the truth.

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Clarissa suddenly felt embarrassed as her face paled slightly over what she said.

What was there to fear?

She hooked up with someone, refused to tell me, but she's scared as well?

What kind of boyfriend would elicit such a response?

Clarissa rarely had a reason to come to D City. She didn't even know that many people in the area, aside from her friends and family. Perhaps there were others like her colleagues or her maternal family members.

But it was not the case.

So the man was ten years older with a decent social standing and did not want her to know of his relationship with Clarissa.

Ellie said nothing and only stood there in silence. She understood.

Instead, she clenched her fists and looked at Clarissa.

"Well, Clarissa. When you first moved into the Tyson Corporation staff hostels, I remember running into my uncle," said Ellie sarcastically. "If I recall correctly, you walked out of the elevator with him. At the time, I even made that joke about him keeping a mistress."

The joke she made Clarissa deeply uncomfortable.

Clarissa was about to refute her when Ellie waved her aside. She had managed to reflect on everything and eventually filled in the gaps on what she thought was strange before, all on her own.

"I also remember him showing up at the film studio. Not to catch up with me or anything, but he went there because something happened to you. It was you he went to see."

"You came back to your old place. You came back to D City for Uncle Matt's sake, I assume?"

"You moved from the apartment your mother gave you to your old place, which was then handled by my Uncle Matt. Later, you claimed to be living with your boyfriend. Or rather, you were living in... Zen Highlands? I think that's where Uncle Matt lives most of the time."

"When there was that incident on the internet, both Uncle Matt and Mr. Justin came forth to help you personally. It wasn't because I had asked or that it was to do me a favor. It was because both you and Uncle Matt were seeing each other!"

"You had gotten in the way of blows meant for me. Uncle Matt went to the police station to sort this out, also because it was you who had gotten injured. It wasn't because he cared about me, but he felt sorry that you got hurt."

"And the most recent bit? Helen's wedding? She knew that you were dating Uncle Matt and tried to curry favor with you."

With each sentence, Clarissa's heart sank further as she grew even paler in the face of Ellie's tirade.

It did not take long for Clarissa to feel the weight of her guilt. Ellie's sneering only added insult to injury.

Clarissa wanted to say something, but nothing came out.

Instead, she could only mouth two words.

"I'm sorry."

"Did you just apologize?"

The apology sounded even more absurd to Ellie. She looked at Clarissa, her gaze a convoluted mess of emotions that ranged from sadness, disappointment, and a hard chill.

Clarissa hurriedly went over hoping to hold Ellie's hand, but she sidestepped it before Clarissa could even approach her.

"Don't touch me. Clarissa, you were my best friend. I trusted you!"

Ellie choked back tears and glared at Clarissa. The pair seemed to sport the same, red-rimmed eyes.

“He is my uncle, Clarissa! You disgust me!”

After that, Ellie quickly got up and left. Clarissa nearly fainted.

When Matthew returned to the Tyson residence, it was there that he found out about Shermaine’s return to D City.

His stern face frowned slightly when he saw her standing there in conversation with Old Mrs. Tyson.

The old lady could not help but say something when she caught a glimpse of her son’s expression. “What is the frown for? I can’t ask you to come home every now and then and keep us company? Do you dislike your own parents now?”

It was an accusation too large for even Matthew to refute, out of concern of disrespect.

As such, he could only sit down as Matthias shot his brother a look of sympathy.

With Shermaine there, Matthew would not be the main subject of ire for too long. However, he only spoke to Matthias and his father about current issues and politics and did not really engage personally with Shermaine.

Old Mrs. Tyson could not tolerate this and took the old man away. She then winked at her eldest son and daughter-in-law as their cue to leave the scene.

Finally, only Matthew and Shermaine remained, in spite of the pair’s silence.

“Matt, have I given you a negative impression or something? I know I’m not perfect enough, but I do like you. Won’t you give me a chance?”

Matthew’s cold gaze lingered on her briefly as he picked up the teacup with his fingers and took a sip.

“Shermaine, my relationship with you is like what I share with Ellie. Familial, or even professional, really.”

"Maybe my age is off-putting, but I'm already a grown woman. I understand if you dislike me, but you haven't even given me a chance. We've barely said a word to each other, and that isn't fair to me at all. After all, how am I any different from the strangers you've dated?"

Matthew was silent for a moment, but his voice remained as ruthless and impassive as ever.

"That's enough, Shermaine."

This humiliated and saddened Shermaine. She clenched her fists, and tears fell onto her face. It was truly a pitiful sight.

Matthew, however, remained unmoved.

Old Mrs. Tyson, who had been spying on them from the side all this while, decided to make an entrance. "Don't cry, Shermaine. Let me tell Matthew off for your sake."

Shortly after, she directed her anger at Matthew.

"Matthew Tyson, you are not a child anymore. Not settling down is one thing, but do you have to be so cruel to Shermaine? Give her a chance! If things don't work out, you can just call things off. But you have to at least try! Shermaine isn't a stranger. She is someone you've known since you were both young, so why is it so hard to accept? Let me just say this. I'm calling the shots tonight and demanding that you go out with her for half a year. I don't care if you agree or not. Just try it out!"

"Mother!"

Matthew would have said more, but she was not listening to him at all. Instead, Old Mrs. Tyson was coaxing an upset Shermaine, determined to interfere in Matthew's personal affairs.

Shermaine was delighted, of course. However, she knew that Matthew would all but accept his mother's interference.

All she could do was wipe away her tears and apologize. "Don't force him, Mrs. Tyson. This isn't what I want at all. I'm sorry, Matt."

“Why are you apologizing? To tell you the truth, you have nothing to apologize for. Especially since you’ve given him so much of your affection and time, all these years.”

Old Mrs. Tyson had her back turned to Matthew the entire time as she focused on Shermaine.

The old woman’s opinion was that her son had been too content with his solitude that she doubted the possibility of him falling in love with anyone at all. This was probably the only way to force him to get along with Shermaine.

How could she accept that her son was going to be a bachelor for the rest of his life?

“Alright, I think we’re done here for now. It has been decided, so let’s have dinner. You don’t have to say a word, Shermaine. I’ll back you up.”

Just like this, the matter was decided on by Old Mrs. Tyson.

Nobody breathed a word about this over dinner. Since they were not directly involved, most of them felt that it was not something they could address.

Matthew had every intention of fighting back but to no avail. Old Mrs. Tyson had managed to maneuver out of all his attempts at broaching the subject.

Just then, Ellie suddenly barged into the house. Despite her hatred for Shermaine, she barely spared the woman a glance. Instead, her anger and loathing were directed at Matthew.

The intensity of Ellie’s glare confused Matthew, who furrowed his brows and returned her gaze.

“What’s the matter?”

When Yuliana saw her daughter looking like this, she was a little worried.

Ellie seemed to be unable to hold back her emotions as well. She stared at the group with red, teary eyes.

She had every intention of questioning Matthew, but she could not say the exact words.

“You’ve crossed a line, Uncle Matt. Do you know how disappointed I am in you?”

The words rang loud and clear in the dining hall. Pin drop silence followed, and all eyes were glued onto the pair.

He stood up and walked towards Ellie with a frown.

“You found out.”

“You make me sick!”

A hint of emotion flickered in Matthew’s eyes before he sighed audibly. “This is my fault.”

Even now, Matthew was still protecting Clarissa, which upset Ellie even further. Since she could not articulate her exact emotions, she stormed upstairs and shut herself inside her room.

Nobody in the family understood what had just happened between the two of them.

“Matthew, what’s going on?”

Since Yuliana had gotten up to console her daughter, Old Mrs. Tyson posed the question at him instead.

Without saying a word, Matthew merely got up and left the house.

The Old Mrs. Tyson yelled after him, but she was powerless to stop his departure. She tried asking her eldest son, but he could not give her an answer either.

After all, how could he know? All he had were guesses, but he was barely certain if they were viable.

Matthew rushed back to Zen Highlands as soon as he could. He stormed in and pushed open the bedroom door but felt relief wash over him when he spotted the small figure of a woman huddled near the sofa. The lights were off.

He then turned on the lights and noticed that Clarissa was there, sobbing with her head between her legs.

He silently thanked the heavens that Clarissa did not make a run for it this time.

Matthew let out the breath he had been holding and loosened his necktie before unbuttoning his shirt slightly. He walked to her side and took her into his arms, then gently stroked the top of her head in an attempt to comfort her.

“Please don’t cry, Clare.”

However, the more he tried to comfort her, the louder she sobbed.

“It was Ellie, wasn’t it?” asked Matthew with a low growl.

At the mention of her name, Clarissa started crying even more.

Matthew sighed gently. “This is my fault and has nothing to do with you. Ellie just doesn’t understand. I’ll try to explain everything so that she stops blaming you too.”

“Ellie...she was s-so angry! She said that I d-disgusted her. It was so harsh, so painful t-to hear. I know t-that I’m at f-fault too...”

Clarissa choked out her apology between sobs and heavy sighs.

“We shouldn’t have treated her like this. She was so good to me, and we were the best of friends. I let her down! I’m a horrible person—”

“Doesn’t that make me worse though?”

Matthew took it upon himself to shoulder this burden, which was not particularly important. He didn’t think it was particularly important to explain himself to Ellie either. However, due to Clarissa’s concerns, he could not just leave things as they were. He’d sooner not say anything than admit he was somehow at fault.

Because all in all, he did nothing wrong.

All he did was fall in love with a woman. What’s so wrong with that?

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Although Clarissa had been comforted by Matthew, there were still ill sentiments that lingered in the air.

Her words had revealed implications that he had to address. With one hand, he forced Clarissa to look at him icy gaze.

"Clarissa, choose your words carefully. Are you saying that you'll not choose me over your friend?"

Clarissa was shocked. A teardrop formed and fell delicately onto the back of his hand as she stared at him, teary-eyed.

Her face burned. Hot, it was scorching hot as if his question had branded itself into her heart.

"Out with it."

Matthew frowned and urged her again.

Clarissa sighed. "No, that's not what I said."

"But that is what you think."

"N-no..."

Clarissa shook her head vigorously. Under Matthew's deep-set gaze, she went silent for a while.

Suddenly, she stretched out her arms and hugged Matthew with all her might, and nuzzled her face against his.

With a voice as soft and coquettish as a kitten's mewl, she said, "I didn't say I would cast you aside. I was just a bit greedy, and want both you and Ellie, Uncle Matthew. You've misunderstood."

Again, Matthew tilted her chin and examined her expression to see if she was telling him the truth.

Clarissa did not back down from his gaze. Her face bore no trace of guilt or any other emotion as he stared at her.

Granted, she was in low spirits, but she was not heartless.

"How can I not want someone as good as you are? Do you take me for a fool? I mean, look at how smart I am!"

There was something about her expression that seemed smug.

Out of things she was good at, self-confidence would have been at the top of the list.

Finally, Matthew's grim expression loosened as he let out the softest of sighs.

Very gently, he traced his thumb over her cheek. Clarissa looked up at him and beamed.

Silly girl.

The ghost of a smile formed on Matthew's mouth as he kissed the edge of her lips. "Don't worry. I'll take care of things."

Obediently, Clarissa hugged him again and hummed in response.

Ellie's odd behavior towards her favorite uncle puzzled everyone in the Tyson family. Especially since what she said sounded very serious.

However, Ellie was reluctant to spill the beans.

Several of her family members tried to coax her into speaking, but she retreated into a shell of her own making and refused to say a word.

The next day arrived, and Matthew decided to drop by the Tyson residence early in the morning.

Ellie had been on her way out. When she saw Matthew, it was obvious that the anger she had towards him had yet to dissipate.

She quickly walked past Matthew to avoid him, only for Matthew to catch her before she could go any further.

“Ellie, get in the car, let’s talk.”

Despite the annoying click of her tongue, she got into his car. She wanted to see what he had to say for himself.

While the pair were in the car, Matthew remained silent for a long time. Ellie, on the other hand, stared impassively into space. In the end, it was Matthew who ended the stalemate and spoke first.

“Clare kept crying last night.”

Ellie’s expression stiffened, but it was a faint reaction. She angled her head and looked out the car window as if she could conceal her emotions better that way.

“Ellie, you’re Clare’s best friend, so you know exactly what she’s like. I initiated this, not her.”

Ellie finally got annoyed enough to remark on this. “Yes, she is my best friend. That’s the point. Don’t you think you went overboard?”

“What do you mean, overboard? She’s a young, beautiful, talented, and attractive woman. I’m just a man.”

Ellie stuttered but could not get the words out. It was as if she had truly seen Matthew for what he was, and she dared not believe it.

I always thought that despite being aloof, you are pure of heart and righteous. You’re an elder, for f*ck’s sake. I never expected you to go after a younger girl, especially since she is my friend.

The doubt and surprise that Ellie emanated seemed to strike a chord in Matthew.

He leveled his gaze directly at Ellie and sighed. “Look, Ellie. The person you assume I am is a myth. I’m but an ordinary man, not a saint. I like Clare and wanted to have her. That’s what men do.”

Now Ellie was shocked into utter speechlessness.

Something about his admission made it difficult for her to react.

Matthew then brushed aside her reaction and continued. “If you want someone to blame, blame me and not Clarissa. Your relationship with her shouldn’t change just because she has a boyfriend.”

Having said that, the remainder of the ride to Ellie’s studio was silent.

Ellie absent-mindedly looked at her surroundings but could not shake off the unease.

She needed the closure but did not even respond to Clarissa’s attempts to contact her. Ellie had shut out all of the phone calls and text messages, much to Clarissa’s disappointment.

Clarissa had yet to do one thing—to seek out Ellie personally. She was most afraid that Ellie was still angry at her. Clarissa had always been a passive person. In her relationships with both Ellie and Matthew, she was never the one to take the lead.

All she could do was wait patiently for Ellie to meet her halfway.

After Justin returned to the D City, he took the time to start casting.

As a screenwriter, Clarissa was a very highly regarded person, especially towards Justin. If there was a casting call, she was bound to be called in to supervise.

As a major director in the film and television industry, Justin represented everything. From the awards, the fame, and box office. When he made a movie, A-list actors would make a beeline to respond to his casting calls. However, his one condition was that every person had to audition regardless of how big of a name they made for themselves. He wanted to level the playing field, and nobody could bend his ironclad rules.

Of course, the allure did not just spread among A-list celebrities. Many upcoming hopefuls would participate as well.

Compared to the set she worked on before, this one seemed to be spectacular as it was.

Clarissa walked towards the location but stopped to marvel at the long lines. And here she thought she had come early.

She observed the many beautiful people who had gathered in attendance. Everyone suddenly observed the beautiful woman who had shown up with no makeup on. Immediately she could sense them sizing her up as they determined whether or not she was suitable competition.

However, the fact that she was invited in immediately also aroused everyone's curiosity.

It wasn't until the audition began that they realized she was a screenwriter named Ms. Quigley.

"What do you think, Clarissa?"

In between each audition, they stopped to discuss the people who had come in so far. Justin, who sat next to Clarissa, would ask her for her opinions whenever he got the chance.

Clarissa smiled. "Everyone is good. I would not expect any less from professionals, of course. They've all managed to express so many different things."

Justin shook his head and laughed. "Don't be that vague! Tell me what you're really thinking! Who do you think is suitable so far? Who can't make the cut? Just tell me."

Clarissa bit her lip shyly. "Well, Director. Let's just say that..."

She then launched into a very long conversation, to which Justin paid careful attention to.

The two were so engrossed in their discussion that they did not notice that the big-shots had arrived to perform as well. As they walked in, they noticed that a certain Mr. Yates was chatting animatedly with a gorgeous-looking woman.

However, being relatively well-informed, they deduced that she was the screenplay writer. While they had heard about her beauty, they did not expect her to be that beautiful. She had certainly exceeded their expectations.

Yaala and Quentin shared a look before they walked over to say hello.

Clarissa, having noticed the two, immediately turned into a starry-eyed fan, eager to take pictures and ask for autographs.

Justin couldn't help but make fun of her. "Come on now, since you're all here, you should give Clarissa your autographs and pictures. I'll help her take them!"

Clarissa smiled sheepishly, but the two of them were good-natured enough to grant her request.

As for the audition, Clarissa found their performance to be a joy to watch.

That was until Shermaine's arrival, of course.

Shermaine was familiar with everyone, given how she greeted everyone. Her attitude towards both Yaala and Quentin was pleasant enough. What was even better was the fact that she shared a close, almost familial bond with Justin.

"I went to see Mr. and Mrs. Yates as soon as I came back. They were complaining that you didn't even go see them the moment you arrived at D City. Your dad jokingly threatened to sever family ties with you as well. Your mom also asked that I help you find a girlfriend while you're filming. But let me clarify, this is not my intent, so leave me out of it!"

Everyone watched the conversation unfold with mild interest except for Clarissa, who spaced out fairly quickly. Yaala was quite interested in Clarissa and kept her occupied with polite banter about some simple topics. A few minutes later, Shermaine had finally finished her rounds before she latched onto Clarissa.

"Ms. Quigley, it's great to see you. Don't you think it's fate? I just finished filming 'The World' and I think I might be working on 'Princess' next. Great stories, by the way. I'm just really happy to work together with you again! Your help was really valuable, so I hope to go through the scenes together with you again. It's merely a humble request on my part, so what do you say?"

One might have assumed that Shermaine sounded humble and sincere, but Clarissa was not fooled. They all recalled the drama that ensued on the set because Clarissa had to step in.

Whether she means it or if she's being a b*tch, Shermaine knows best.

In the midst of the conversation, Shermaine had ended up holding Clarissa's hands as a sign of mock kinship. Clarissa promptly withdrew them and looked at Justin instead. "I wouldn't dare interfere with a professional," she said mildly. "Are we auditioning now, Mr. Yates?"

An expectant look at Justin then spurred him into action as the pair then prepared for Shermaine's audition.

Shermaine lowered her eyes. A hint of malice flashed in them, but it was not noticeable enough.

She then looked up again to study the script she had to read.

An audition? I still need to audition for this? Even so, with Clarissa sitting next to Justin like that, it was as if Shermaine's fate was sealed. This made her seethe.

The scene being read was that of a princess whose country was in ruin. Shermaine had to channel the right amount of anger and frustration for this.

Halfway through her audition, she was interrupted by Justin.

He frowned, seemingly dissatisfied. "Shermaine, try this instead."

He wants me to play the usurper?

Shermaine was not too happy about that either. "Justin, I don't think the usurper's role suits me at all. I don't like it. I think I'm better suited to play the princess herself. Having just read the scene, I thought of something as well. Why not take a look and see if this works?"

Justin looked at Clarissa in silence, who nodded gently.

Shermaine then clasped her hands together and began her acting again. Only this time, she decided to put a lid on the unkindness and anger in herself.

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"Sure, that works I guess."

However, Justin did not sound particularly enthusiastic. His voice had given that much away.

Shermaine had a really bad feeling about the audition, especially since it concerned Clarissa. It seemed as if Justin had read into something else Clarissa conveyed, so what was this? Was Clarissa taking revenge? Anything was possible.

Shermaine walked up to Justin. They murmured something then walked out of the venue for some privacy.

Clarissa was not remotely curious. Since Shermaine was the last to arrive, it signaled the end of today's auditions as well. She promptly left after Shermaine did.

That evening, Shermaine had dinner with Justin. Matthew and Jeremy were invited as well.

Matthew, however, did not show up.

Of course, Matthew's presence was not important. Not all of them met Shermaine through Matthew, so they all got along just fine without him.

One of the topics that came up was the movie Justin planned on making.

"So, Shermaine. I heard you audition for Yates' movie this time? However, since you've worked with him before, you won't gain much since you're familiar with him. Isn't it better to expand your horizons and work for someone else? I hear there is a new director by the name of Charles or something."

Shermaine and Jeremy were somewhat related but through distant branches of the family.

Justin was introduced to Shermaine via Matthew.

Everyone thought that her persistence with Matthew would eventually pay off, but who would've thought that someone else could succeed where she had failed. Shermaine had lost to an outsider, at that.

It had to be fate, who could argue otherwise?

Everyone also knew Clarissa. But nobody wanted to break the news to Shermaine since Matthew himself had not said a word about it.

Shermaine smiled. "Well, I like acting in Justin's movies. Besides, we already have a good working relationship, so why would I want to make things more difficult? I'm going to support Justin as much as I can.

Shermaine sounded as if Justin had yet to cast a protagonist in his film.

On the surface, of course, it sounded as if it was just affection and genuine support.

Justin was never one to mince words. Even if they were in the presence of others, he always said what needed to be said.

"Shermaine, I don't think the first lead suits you. The supporting role would be a better fit instead. That being said, this is still a supporting role, and maybe you think that you need not be playing something so small. So even if you turn it down, I'll bear you no hard feelings. I just have to recast the role."

Justin only said that she was unsuitable to play the role, but he left out how she did not perform as well as Yaala.

Shermaine's expression darkened. The others then decided to jump in and change the subject to uplift the awkwardness from earlier.

"Shermaine, if it's truly unsuitable, just let it go. I think you should pay attention to the finer details. If they want to cast someone chubby as the princess, it'll definitely not work for you. At least, that's how Justin described it. By the way, I have a decent drama coming up, maybe you can check that out!"

Shermaine shook her head at Jackson's suggestion. "Justin, I know I'll be suitable for the role when I do get down to performing. Didn't we do pretty well in our previous show? You

also said that I was unsuitable then, but I ended up winning an award. The response was great too. I think you don't mean what you're saying."

After Shermaine finished speaking, Justin looked at her with a stern frown. "So, what are you trying to say?"

"Whatever happened in the studio with Clarissa was just a misunderstanding. She might even resent me still. If you're helping her vent by denying me a good part, then I'll be very disappointed in you. We've known each other for so many years now, is that nothing compared to your affection for one woman?"

Justin cleared his throat audibly, and the others seemed to look quite uncomfortable.

Shermaine eyed them suspiciously.

What is that reaction supposed to mean? Were they not aware of the incident between Justin and Clarissa?

"No, Yates, but...you and Clarissa.."

A sharp look from Justin shut Yarick up immediately. "Shermaine, I have a working relationship with Clarissa. Moreover, the final decision for casting is mine to make. It has nothing to do with her."

"If her opinion doesn't matter, what was she doing at the audition today? You know what? Fine. I don't care what you do with each other in the future. But now, I'm still cast in a supporting role. This is an outrage and an insult. This is revenge."

"That's enough!"

Justin yelled at Shermaine, who trembled at his sudden outburst of anger.

Come to think of it, why was she so insistent on starring in this movie?

In the beginning, Justin was a very fussy director who would nitpick over everything. He either ignored her face onset or cursed at her outright. Shermaine hated him initially but had to admit that Justin had an artistic genius about him. Every single one of his productions was masterpieces in their own right.

If she did not have faith that his work could restore her declining popularity, she would not insist on starring in Justin's film.

That was why his sudden outburst suddenly caused all the feelings of disgust and fear that she tried so hard to suppress to overflow again.

Justin barely had any sympathy left for her.

"Shermaine, I knew from the start that you were every bit the narrow-minded person who would spread rumors to incur malice. I should not have cast you at all."

It was a curt statement. Cruel, ruthless, even, But it was effective.

Everyone present stared at Justin in surprise. His face, however, was unrelenting.

Shermaine who had already turned quite pale by shock looked quite pitiful.

"Alright, I've said my piece. I think you're not suited for the role, and that's that. There was no need to drag anyone else into this. The grudge you both seem to have, regardless of how true it is, has nothing to do with me."

Shortly afterwards, Justin got up and left.

It took some time, but Shermaine finally broke into tears, seemingly inconsolable.

This display upset everyone, but it affected Jeremy the most. He always had a soft spot for damsels in distress.

"It's alright, Shermaine, don't cry. Yates has always been blunt. Especially when it comes to movies or his own body of work. He did it to get a rise out of you, but I don't think he meant it. Don't take it to heart!"

"Yeah, Shermaine. Yates probably had a bit too much to drink and decided to run his mouth."

Shermaine cried for a long while, and her eyes reddened quite badly. When she finally managed to stop, she dried her tears and spoke for the first time. "He wasn't like this before. Did he actually rile me up on Clarissa's behalf? This is unacceptable. He did this over a girl. He's also treating me like this today, so that means he'll do that to someone else? Does he not care for his friends?"

This is ridiculous enough.

The corners of Jeremy's mouth twitched in a secret smile. He shared a look with Henry, who also seemed to have an inward grin.

Her intended meaning was not exactly difficult to miss.

They have not had much contact with Shermaine before. Since she spent more time with Matthew, they didn't know much about her.

As they reflected on this, they realized that it was no different this time.

Yates knew Shermaine best, but he had never appreciated Shermaine. On the contrary, he preferred the warmth of a person like Clarissa and went to the extent of protecting her. They only understood this when they compared the two women that way.

As Yates said before, Shermaine was quite a difficult person.

Closer to the end of dinner, Shermaine seemed to have drunk quite a bit of alcohol. It could be either Matthew's disregard or Justin's anger that caused her to feel depressed. Since she was already inebriated, she kept calling out Matthew's name.

If anyone tried to approach or touch her, she would struggle.

Given the situation, they had no choice but to seek out Matthew.

Matthew, however, had flatly refused without any mercy.

He had nothing to do with the situation there. At the house, Clarissa held a piece of fruit as she snuggled against Matthew. She tried to focus on the TV show she was watching but then overheard the word "Shermaine" and could not focus anymore. After Matthew hung up, Clarissa silently focused on her show but to no avail. The phone call had already bothered her.

After a while, Matthew finally spoke. He gently squeezed Clarissa's finger and plopped the grape she was holding into her mouth with a chuckle. "What are you thinking about?"

"It's nothing."

"Is that so?"

Matthew flicked at her hair with his fingers to see if he could get a reaction from her. Clarissa pushed his hand away quite impatiently, after a while.

"What are you doing?"

"Tsk. Are you annoyed?"

Clarissa murmured a gentle response and ignored him again, seemingly engrossed in the program she was watching. Her annoyance had nothing to do with his ministrations to her hair.

Matthew was well aware of this. He smirked and leaned over, letting the warmth of his breath tickle Clarissa's ear.

"Someone called me. It was about Shermaine."

Clarissa's body immediately stiffened. She pursed her lips and did not say anything.

Matthew stifled his laughter and continued to tease her. "Come now, aren't you the least bit curious why they called?"

"No, what does that have to do with me? Go away, I don't want to hear a single word."

Clarissa pushed Matthew away impatiently, and the latter fell on his side with a dull thud.

She sat there, quite still, but soon felt that the show she was watching had suddenly become unbearable. She could not stand the way they were all smiling at the screen.

Flustered, she picked up the remote and began restlessly surfing through different channels.

Matthew leaned back lazily on the other side of the sofa and grinned while he observed the annoyed woman with great interest.

It wasn't long until Clarissa suddenly hurled the remote control away in frustration and set down the fruit bowl before she burrowed deeper into Matthew's embrace.

Matthew could no longer hold his laughter in. As Clarissa snuggled deeper, she accidentally elbowed him in the ribs. He yelped with a little pain but did not stop laughing.

Like a torturer hell-bent on extracting a confession, Clarissa pressed her arm against Matthew's neck in a mock chokehold. "Out with it. What did you guys talk about?"

Matthew raised his eyebrows at her. "Well, didn't say you didn't care?"

"That was then. Focus on the now. Speak."

Matthew did not feel threatened by her gesture at all. Instead, he lazily held her by the waist and smiled at her. "Fine. Shermaine got drunk and they wanted me to go get her."

Clarissa started fuming the moment he finished speaking.

"Why does it have to be you? Who asked you to anyway?"

"Jeremy."

"That's a bit too much, even for him. He knows you're with me. Why did he even bother asking?"

"Ah, yes. I am with you. A most astute observation. Why don't you actually tell everyone that, though?"

You'll Fall for Me, Today or Tomorrow

Chapter 105

Clarissa's face blushed scarlet.

How did we end up here?

Clarissa frowned and prodded Matthew's face that seemed to be inching towards her.

"I'm being serious."

"So am I. Clare, let everyone know that I am yours. I guarantee that nobody will call me for such banal reasons ever again."

Clare was stunned into silence.

Is he thinking of going public with our relationship?

I don't think it's the right time. Especially now.

Clarissa smirked and gave him an awkward smile. "I think Mr. Smallwood is aware and that he did it on purpose. This has got nothing to do with everyone else. Forget it. You refused, so I don't really care anymore."

As she said this, she got up and left, muttering to herself about how tired she was after a long day.

Matthew looked at Clarissa's hurriedly retreating figure and laughed. "Coward."

It wouldn't be too much of a hassle if Matthew chose to let the cat out of the bag. The worst of the opposition would come from the Tysons themselves, but that did not matter to him at all.

However, he still had to consider how stressed Clarissa would be. A public proclamation would definitely come with its own host of problems.

It was precisely because of this that Matthew was willing to temporarily hide his love affair with Clarissa. He wanted to give her a chance to adapt.

This was not meant to be a permanent solution.

She was to become his wife, sooner or later.

Of this, Matthew was certain. He thought that he was simply infatuated by her in the beginning, but he now realized that he could not fathom falling in love with anyone else. He was determined to be with Clarissa, and she was the only one for him.

She was the only one who could bring him the contentment he so desired. Besides, who else would he rather call Mrs. Tyson if not Clarissa?

Shermaine did have quite a bit to drink, but she was not completely inebriated. This was all facade.

She tried to use this ruse to get Matthew to attend to her, but it failed miserably.

Finally, all she could do was feign unconsciousness and was promptly sent home to the Smallwood residence by both her assistant and Jeremy.

Shermaine suddenly opened her eyes the moment Jeremy left, shocking Kayla who was helping her get ready for bed.

"Shermaine, are you awake?"

Shermaine took one look at her mother and hugged her tightly. She then burst into tears out of heartbreak, all while accusing Matthew of cruelty and indifference.

Kayla could not help but feel sorry for her daughter as she too started crying.

Kayla was a very sentimental woman of gentle temperament who also cried quite easily. Seeing her daughter so upset was more than enough to make her upset.

James happened to hear the commotion and came out to look. He sighed when he realized that those were the sounds of both his daughter and wife.

"What happened?"

"Oh, James."

Kayla immediately threw herself into her husband's arms, seeking comfort. "Oh, why does Shermaine have to suffer such a horrible fate? It's all my fault! All she did was fall in love with a man. Is that a crime now? I can't help but recall our circumstances when we fell in love."

Why did she have to bring fate and circumstance into this?

However, James understood what his wife meant.

All of that was in the past, but it hurt her as if it were a fresh wound. Even James felt helpless, watching them.

"It's alright, don't cry. What happened? Didn't you have an audition today?"

A teary-eyed Shermaine then detailed everything that had happened, including how Matthew practically ignored her when she was at her most vulnerable.

Shermaine knew exactly what to say to play the part of the wronged little girl. Naturally, she hoped that they would come running to her aid when she needed it.

"Dad, it's like she has bewitched Justin, and I can't do a thing about it. I reached out to Matt, but he won't answer my calls. Who on earth did I provoke? All I want is to act in a good film and fall in love with whoever I please. Is that so wrong?"

When James heard that his daughter was possibly being bullied, he also grew angry.

However, there was little he could do about Matthew. The screenwriter, on the other hand, was a different story altogether. If she had a bone to pick with his daughter, he would do anything in his power to stop it.

"Shermaine, what is the screenwriter's name? Tell me, and I'll have a word with Justin."

Shermaine hesitated briefly but shook her head.

"Dad, let me sort this out on my own. It won't do if you interfere."

"But can you handle this?" asked James.

"I can, Dad. Don't worry. If you intervene, it'll probably affect my relationship with Justin. However, can you maybe help me deal with the Tysons? Old Mrs. Tyson tried to force Matt to date me for half a year, but he has refused to agree. I'm not asking for anything else! All I want is a chance with him so that maybe he'll fall in love with me. But he is being very stubborn, and I can't do anything about it."

"But if Matthew disagrees, there is very little we can do to change his mind," said James thoughtfully.

"There might be another way," replied Kayla. "Should I seek out my mother?"

Shermaine was a little surprised to hear this.

Whose mother?

James shook his head. "Can you actually do something like that over a matter like this?"

"What do you mean? I have a grandmother? Why have you not mentioned this before, Mom?"

The question made Kayla weep in anguish. James knew that this was an uncomfortable subject for his wife and decided not to elaborate. Instead, he helped Kayla back to their room to comfort her.

Shermaine was left standing in the hallway with more questions than answers.

The next day, Kayla told her something that she had kept concealed for many years.

It turned out that Kayla was the heir to the Wynters, a prominent family in D City. But because she fell in love with James, who did not come from wealth, she decided to elope and sever family ties. It wasn't as if James had no motivation at all. He managed to start his own company from the ground up. After this, he returned to D City. When Kayla was pregnant with Shermaine, she had reached out to her family, but they chose not to engage. They believed their daughter died the day she turned her back on them. Even though they now lived in the same city, they were for all intents and purposes, strangers.

Only some of the elders were aware of Kayla's past, but many were not aware of her true heritage as a child of the Wynters.

Shermaine was shocked at the end of this revelation. "You're really a member of the Wynters family, Mom?"

The Wynters name conjured very specific images in Shermaine's mind. They were a powerful family with old ties to politics and business. She had not expected that her mother came from such proud stock.

This surprised Shermaine.

"Why didn't you go back even after so many years? Family is still family. Can they still keep rejecting you for long? I hear that Old Mrs. Wynters is getting old. I figured most old folks

would want some kind of closure or for the family to be reunited. Why don't you try again? Maybe they will accept us, now that Dad is no longer the same poor man you married. It's not like we're expecting property from them, so there is no reason for them to reject us."

For Shermaine to be so eager for her mother to return to the Wynters, it was no surprise that it came with her own selfish intentions.

However, the mere suggestion of this made Kayla seem even more deflated than she already was.

"Well, wait until your father comes back, and we'll discuss this again. You should head to work."

Shermaine could sense her mother's obvious hesitation. While she did not understand why it was so, she then decided to let the matter slide for now. Shermaine still had to go to work.

After she left home, Shermaine had a meeting with Lizzie.

"So, I've got so many good scripts with me today, many of which are likely to win awards. We also have some new endorsements to consider—"

"Forget it, Lizzie. Call Justin's studio and make the confirmation. I'm accepting the part."

"What?"

Lizzie couldn't believe that Shermaine would actually agree to play a supporting role.

Not after Justin Yates' blatant refusal to cast her in the lead, at least. Perhaps this was truly an attempt to shame her, and Shermaine was right after all.

But why was she still so insistent on going?

"Do I need to repeat myself, Lizzie?"

Shermaine's voice had a hard chill, despite her downcast eyes.

"No, I heard you the first time."

Lizzie hurriedly left and called Justin's studio. Despite confirming this with them, she could not shake off the discomfort that she felt.

All this while, Lizzie had thought of Shermaine as just any other artist. Despite the company's seemingly preferential treatment for her, Shermaine had not made her job much easier.

She realized that she could not just rely on Shermaine alone for work. Something big would happen one day, and Lizzie needed to find a way out before it was too late.

After Justin hung up, he turned around to speak to Clarissa. "Shermaine has agreed to play the supporting role."

Clarissa was shocked.

Shermaine agreed? This seems to be out of character, even for her.

Justin chuckled lightly. "Are you surprised?"

Clarissa nodded.

"I was not too surprised."

Clarissa smiled. "Well, you've known her for some time, so it's only natural that you know what her temperament is like as well."

Justin slowly explained, "Apart from the last award-winning film I put out, she hasn't had any good roles in the last few years. Her popularity has suffered as a result. Although she has received several international endorsements, she's still quite young. If she doesn't improve, the industry will naturally move on to the younger and more talented. I have confidence in my own movies, and so does everyone else. Shermaine is trying to boost her own career to the next level through this role. Even if she isn't the lead actress, the supporting actress is still a fabulous role. There's no way she can't know that."

Clarissa nodded, but Justin was not done. "Listen. You should just keep your distance from her the moment we start filming officially."

Clarissa raised a finely arched brow but recalled the time when Shermaine had played a nasty trick on her in the studio. "Mr. Yates, you needn't remind me. I'll definitely keep my distance."

They did not say much, but she knew that he was referring to that incident with Shermaine.

"In addition, we'll be filming outside of D City for a few months. You needn't—"

"I'm tagging along too."

"I supposed. Does Matthew know?"

Justin smiled at the silence that followed. "Well, do keep him posted."

After that, Justin went off to busy himself with work. Does he mean I need to inform Matthew? Or ask him for permission, maybe?

This is work-related.

The only thing that could be said about Clarissa's thinking was the oversimplification of everything. Matthew was anything but that.